Park News and Visitor Guide

National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior

Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot
National Monuments

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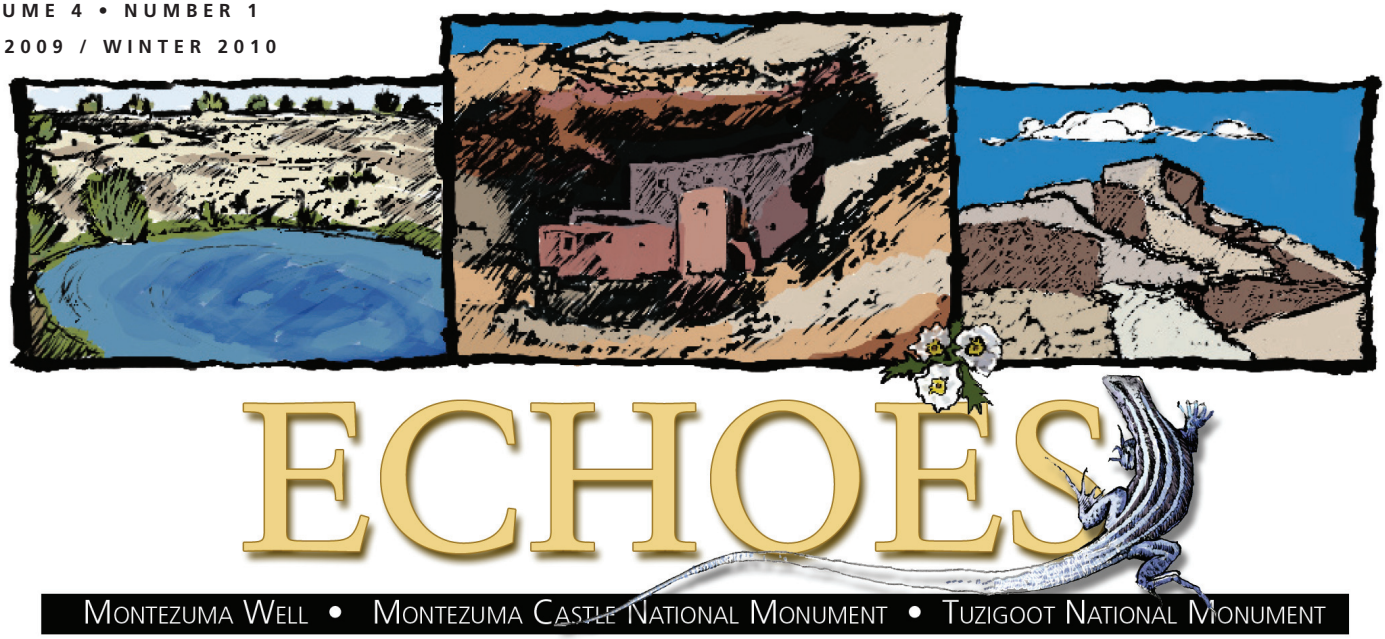

Welcome To The Monuments Of The Verde Valley

The Verde Valley, lying under the spectacular pine-clad cliffs of the Mogollon Rim of central Arizona, forms an immense biological transition between desert, grassland and forest vegetation zones.

As the seasons change, this endangered riparian or streamside habitat of the Verde River serves as a migration corridor for many animals traveling from summer to winter ranges in the south. But for thousands of years, the Verde Valley was also a haven for the movement of people, providing the food and water all life needs for survival.

The National Monuments of the Verde Valley - Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well and Tuzigoot - protect and interpret the legacy of the Sinagua culture, an Native people who flourished in the area for centuries, long before Columbus claimed to have discovered this New World.

Montezuma Castle has been described as the best preserved and most dramatic cliff dwelling in the United States. Montezuma Well is a natural limestone sinkhole with prehistoric sites and several animal species found nowhere else in the world. Tuzigoot is the remains of a 110-room pueblo perched on a high ridge with a panoramic view of the Verde River.

Today's visitors marvel at the well-preserved Sinagua dwellings, but also allow some time to experience the oasis of the riparian area. As the seasons change, we invite you to – ENJOY!

— Kathy M. Davis, Superintendent

Echoes from the Past

Discovering the 10,000 Year Legacy of People in the Verde Valley

A visit to Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well and Tuzigoot National Monuments provokes many questions. Why did they live here? Where did they go? And, perhaps most importantly, how did they live in this land of seemingly harsh contrasts: hot and arid in the summer, cool in the winter?

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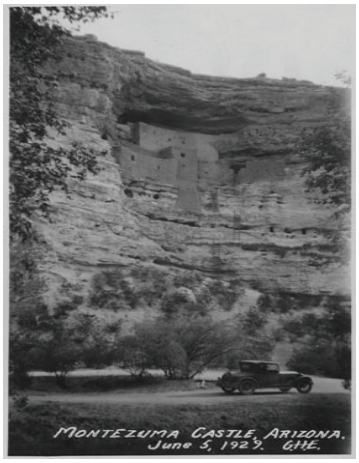

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GENERAL INFORMATION

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Montezuma Castle & Tuzigoot National Monuments

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Hours of Operation (Closed Christmas Day)
September - May: Daily 8am - 5pm
June - August: Daily 8am - 6pm

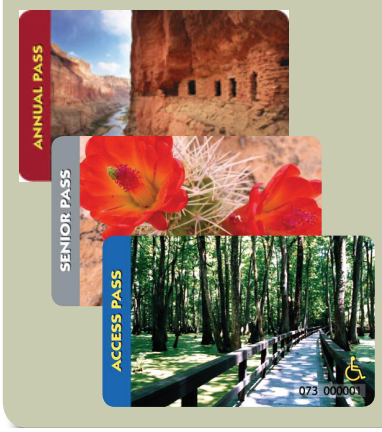
Park Entrance Fees and Passes

Daily Entrance Fees for Montezuma Castle or Tuzigoot:

$5 per adult (16 & over) Children FREE (under 16)

Combined Fees for Montezuma Castle AND Tuzigoot:

$8 per adult (16 & over) Children FREE (under 16)



INTERAGENCY ANNUAL PASS: $80
Grants access to all federal fee areas in the U.S. (with some exceptions), including all national parks and monuments, for twelve months from date of purchase.

INTERAGENCY SENIOR PASS: $10
A one-time fee grants access to all federal fee areas in the U.S. (with some exceptions). For US citizens or permanent residents 62 years of age or older.

INTERAGENCY ACCESS PASS: FREE
Grants access to all federal fee areas in the U.S. (with some exceptions) for permanently disabled US citizens or permanent residents.

Protect your Monuments

- The arid desert landscape is very fragile and wildfires are a real danger. Smoking is permitted in designated areas only.
- All the Monuments are protecting archeological sites as well as natural resources. It is against the law to tamper with, deface or remove any artifact, plant, rock or other natural feature of the park.
- Hiking off the trails can damage the soil crust — a living groundcover of lichens, mosses and other organisms.
- Off-road parking or driving is prohibited.
- Please help with trash removal and use the waste receptacles. We have an active recycling program for aluminum cans and plastic bottles, with designated blue receptacles.
- Camping is prohibited in all areas of the Monuments.
- Bicycles, skateboards and any motorized vehicle other than wheelchairs are not permitted on the trails.
- Gas stoves are permitted only at the Montezuma Well picnic area. No ash producing fires are allowed in the Monuments.
- Please help with trash removal and use the waste receptacles. We have an active recycling program for aluminum cans and plastic bottles, with designated brown receptacles.

Protect Yourself

- Remember to drink lots of water, use sunscreen and wear a hat! If you feel thirsty you are already on the way to being dehydrated. Be prepared with appropriate footwear and clothing for temperatures that can exceed 100 degrees in the summer and below freezing in the winter.
- Please stay on the trails. Rattlesnakes live here although they are rarely sighted.
- Handrails are there for your safety; please do not go past them. Rock surfaces can be slippery; please stay away from any cliff edge.
- Pets on a short leash are allowed on the trails but must be carried into Visitor Centers. Do not leave pets in a vehicle during warm weather. Please clean up after your pet.

Ranger Programs

- Ranger programs are offered at least twice daily at Montezuma Castle and as staffing allows at both Tuzigoot and Montezuma Well. These programs range in length from 20 minutes to an hour and cover topics including archeology, Sinagua culture and the geology/biology of the Verde Valley. Ask a ranger at the park visitor center for details on times and locations of these programs.

- Education programs and classroom presentation are also available to local and visiting school groups. Call Ranger Joshua Boles at (928)567-3322 x30, or email (joshua_boles@nps.gov) for more information and scheduling.

Accessibility

- The National Parks and Monuments are areas of great beauty and significance, set aside for all to enjoy. Ask a Ranger if there are any questions or concerns about accessibility. Audio cassettes and text in Braille are available. More details about trails and the Visitor Centers are available under individual Monument descriptions.

VIP Program

- Our volunteers are priceless! The National Park Service's "Volunteers in Parks" program gives the public an opportunity to share knowledge and experience. Call 928-567-3322, ext. 30

"Echoes" is provided by
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Montezuma Well and Tuzigoot National Monument
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Masthead art © 2004
Montezuma Castle National Monument
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MONTEZUMA CASTLE

It is not a castle — although there is a great magnificence to this prehistoric American Indian structure — and the Aztec emperor Moctezuma II was never here; the Castle was inhabited at least a century before he was born!

Rising 100 feet above the Beaver Creek floodplain, Montezuma Castle is a testimony to the resilience and innovations of a people labeled the "Sinagua," named after the Spanish term for the San Francisco Peaks, the "Sierra Sin Agua" — "the mountain without water."

Montezuma Castle is one of the best-preserved cliff dwellings in the United States. It is 90 percent original despite years of unauthorized excavation, visitation and even one attempt to blow apart a wall to collect artifacts.

Origins

Montezuma Castle was not an isolated structure where people lived generation after generation, having little contact with neighbors. The Castle instead was a small, but very dramatic, part of a large community of people spread up and down the waterways of the Verde Valley. As many as 6,000 to 8,000 people may have lived in the valley in small villages no more than two miles apart.

Montezuma Castle is located along Beaver Creek, possibly a final leg in a major prehistoric trade route from northern Arizona. People following this trail were seeking salt, cotton, argillite and other minerals.

Were the residents of Montezuma Castle keeping watch on traders or other visitors entering the area, or was it simply a very nice place to live? No one really knows.

The Castle

Montezuma Castle is built into a deep alcove with masonry rooms added in phases. A thick, substantial roof of sycamore beams, reeds, grasses and clay often served as the floor of the next room built on top. Entrance to most areas was usually from a hole in the roof; a ladder made access easier.

The 19 rooms could have housed 35 to 50 people, conserving precious farmland near the creek. Around the corner was "Castle A," a site with 45 to 50 rooms that also hugged the limestone cliff. These people were certainly related, sharing food, land, friendships; all ties that bind a community.

There is little evidence of conflict or warfare but perhaps people felt more secure living in the Castle. The series of ladders used to climb to the site could be pulled in for the night and there is a panoramic view of the river and valley from the top parapet level. A small ruin above the Castle, on the top of the cliff, allows views of the entire countryside; a sentry would have advance warning of anyone entering the area.

Just as important - the Castle is simply a wonderful place to live in all seasons. It is cool in the summer and warm in the winter. The higher elevation gives some relief from biting mosquitoes, juniper gnats and other pesky vermin. Daily activities, such as processing food, were done on the roof, and most areas have an inspiring creekfront view!

Moving Away

Starting around 1380 to 1400, people began moving from the area, probably joining relatives in large pueblos to the east. As more explanations are offered for their departure, more questions arise. Stress factors may have included prolonged drought, disease, and nutrient-depleted soil from growing corn.

The departure from Montezuma Castle and surrounding ancestral lands had to have been very emotional. The ties to the land were over centuries and generations — the decision to leave could only have been out of necessity.

The "Halls of Montezuma"

In 1874, some of the first Euro-American explorers to see Montezuma Castle were veterans of the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). When they saw the great cliff dwellings and large pueblos with standing walls, they didn't believe the local indigenous people had the knowledge or ability to construct such imposing structures, and so attributed them to the Aztecs, whose magnificent ruins they had seen in Mexico.

A popular Marine marching song of the time referred to the "Halls of Montezuma," or, Mexico City, center of the Aztec world. Inspired, the veterans felt the Aztec king had to have been somehow involved!

Once Montezuma Castle was recorded on early maps, the name was accepted.

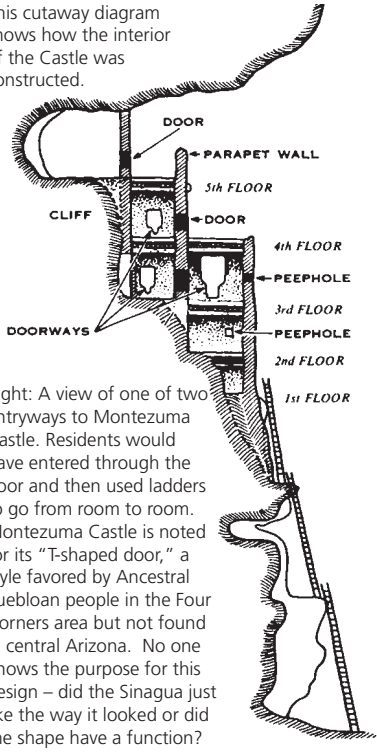
When Fort Verde was established to subdue and round up the Yavapai and Apache people, a popular outing for officers and enlisted men was to visit "The Castle." Depending on the perspective, it was either a site to preserve or a treasure chest full of curiosities to take home.

Very few original artifacts remained in 1906 when President Teddy Roosevelt declared Montezuma Castle a National Monument, but protection of the structure for future generations was assured.

In 1933, "Castle A" was excavated, uncovering a wealth of information and artifacts that expanded our knowledge of the Sinagua. The Visitor Center displays at Tuzigoot and Montezuma Castle showcase this culture; a legacy that did not disappear but is still alive with the Pueblo people of today.

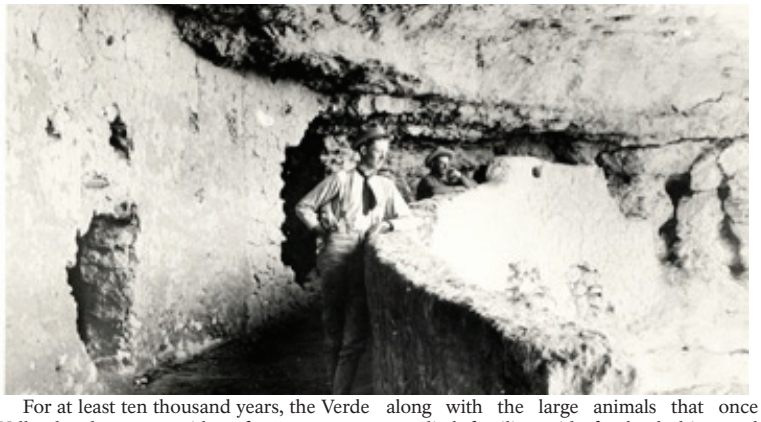
By Anne Worthington
National Park Service

This cutaway diagram shows how the interior of the Castle was constructed.



Right: A view of one of two entryways to Montezuma Castle. Residents would have entered through the door and then used ladders to go from room to room. Montezuma Castle is noted for its "T-shaped door," a style favored by Ancestral Puebloan people in the Four Corners area but not found in central Arizona. No one knows the purpose for this design – did the Sinagua just like the way it looked or did the shape have a function?

Echoes From The Past - The Sinagua



For at least ten thousand years, the Verde Valley has been a corridor of movement as people followed the seasonal migrations of big game animals, raised their families and utilized the natural resources of the land. Today people flock to Northern Arizona, both to live and to play, precisely because of this variable climate. Whether escaping the even colder northern latitudes in the winter or the oppressive heat to the south in the summer, the Verde Valley still stands as a migration corridor for people from all over the world. But the Valley we experience today is very different from what earlier inhabitants saw.

Northern Arizona was once much cooler and moist and the open range flowed with the deep, thick grasses favored by now extinct large mammals such as camel, giant elk, mammoths and other big game animals. The earliest human inhabitants of the Southwest, the Paleoindians, killed these massive creatures with a distinctive stone spear tip termed the Clovis point, and at least 16 of these extremely rare tools have been identified in the Verde Valley.

The Birth of Agriculture

Over the millennia, the climate gradually changed and the vast grasslands disappeared along with the large animals that once supplied families with food, clothing and other needs. People had to broaden their reliance on other availible plants and animals as well as develope and strengthen a network of alliances. Besides creating a market to exchange minerals, textiles, jewelry and other resources, such commerce also provided a mechanism to share new technologies and ideas while extending family and social ties.

This interaction with people from what is now Mexico introduced changes that forever altered life in the Southwest. A new idea challenged thousands of years of a sustainable hunting and gathering lifestyle and revolutionized the way people interacted with and transformed the land: agriculture.

Two warm weather plants native to Mesoamerica, corn and cotton, were hybridized over the centuries and traded into the desert southwest, gradually adapting to the short, arid growing season of northern Arizona. When properly tended and stored, corn, beans and squash provided a nutritious year-around source of food. People never gave up supplementing their diets with animals and native plants, but as larger game became increasingly scarce, the great hunts of the past were no longer a guaranteed method of survival.

Agriculture also changed the way human society was organized after thousands of years of hunting and gathering. Corn must be planted and tended by people and cannot survive as a wild plant. Accomplishing this required larger communities, enabling people to pool resources and provide the labor needed to weed their crops and process the harvest, not to mention enjoy new social and family connections.

The earliest dwellings in these communities were partially excavated into the ground with a roof of timber, brush, and clay. By A.D. 600, small settlements of these pithouses ringed the periphery of the Verde Valley and scattered along the waterways. One such dwelling, the "Pithouse Ruin," can be seen at Montezuma Well.

About the same time, durable pottery vessels for cooking and storage were first utilized, since fragile clay pots are impractical for nomadic people who are constantly on the move. Weaving technology, based on spinning cotton fiber into a thread and using a loom, traveled up the large river valleys from Mexico and was quickly mastered by the people of the Verde Valley.

Five hundred years later, around A.D. 1100, people were constructing pueblos - solid masonry structures with mud-plastered walls. They also made distinctive polished ceramics and produced some of the finest textiles in the Southwest. Archeologists refer to this culture as with the word Sinagua (Spanish for "without water"), one of several groups of people in north and central Arizona that shared basic core cultural concepts.

"What's That Tree With the White Bark?"

The Arizona Sycamore is a Highlight of Any Visit

Ghostly white trunks and spreading gnarled branches rise in stark contrast to the vivid hues of green along the riparian, or streamside, areas of the Verde Valley. The Arizona Sycamore, often reaching heights of 80 feet, is one of the most distinctive sights at Montezuma Castle and Montezuma Well. This member of the Plane Tree family once blanketed Arizona 63 million years ago when the climate was cool and moist. As the weather became drier these deciduous trees retreated to areas close to permanent water, such as the perennial riverways and canyon bottoms that bisect the state.

Some amazing adaptations help the Arizona Sycamore survive from seeding to old age, at least 200 years. Each fruit pod contains an average of 667 seeds with a protective coating designed to withstand seasonal flooding; the torrents of water reshaping the land, moving and depositing masses of rocks, earth and debris.

The roots of the young plant must be able to penetrate the rock-laden, compacted substrate. If torrential flooding scours the area, the seedlings may be left literally high and dry with roots that have to remain in moist soil to thrive. Once established, the trees help protect against erosion, capturing precious topsoil for other plant life.

The sycamore hosts a myriad of species native to Arizona. Large palm-shaped leaves protect and shelter the many small birds using the waterways as a migration corridor. Woodpeckers and other burrowing animals nest in the spreading branches and insects go through various life stages as they become sustenance for even more creatures. In the hot, dry summer months, sycamores offer shade and relief to all life along the banks.

People in the Verde Valley have used the soft wood of the Arizona Sycamore for thousands of years. The ancient Sinagua use these trees for many of the support beams still visible in Montezuma Castle. Some of these beams, which were hoisted 80 feet above the valley floor, are estimated to weigh over two tons!

Montezuma Castle National Monument is one of the best locations to view Arizona Sycamore in its natural state. Sadly, over 90 percent of Arizona's riparian areas, habitat necessary for the survival of these glorious trees, have been lost to development or are not accessible to the general public.

Montezuma Well features a large curved sycamore along the Outlet Trail, unchanged since it was photographed in the 1870's, this tree stands as a relic of the distant past and continues to inspire awe in visitors today.

Echoes From The Past - The Sinagua

What's In a Name?

Visitors to the Southwest encounter many names associated with these prehistoric American Indian cultural groups. Names such as *Anasazi*, *Chaco*, and *Mesa Verde* tend to be more familiar. But these groups encompass only a tiny portion of the prehistoric Southwestern cultures, which also included the *Kayenta*, *Salado*, *Hohokam* and the *Sinagua*. However, they are not the names these people gave themselves, but rather were coined by archeologists in the last century in an attempt to define and describe groups of people who interacted with extensive trade connections, practiced similar lifeways, engaged in agriculture and shared religious concepts and practices.

In 1916, Dr. Harold S Colton, founder of the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff, began extensive archeological surveys of central and northern Arizona. He was the first to recognize that the distribution of various pottery types reflected different cultural groups. Dr. Colton made an observation that "pottery equals people" and on this basis named prehistoric cultural areas using geographic terms: Mesa Verde, Chaco, Mogollon. Within those areas he recognized even more localized groups: Salado, Sinagua, and Prescott. Dr. Colton called the early people of the Flagstaff and Verde Valley areas "Sinagua" after the name early Spanish explorers gave the San Francisco Peaks in Flagstaff: the 'Sierra Sin Agua", or "mountain without water".

Chances are, since these cultures possessed no written language, we will never learn what these people called themselves. However, speaking to their descendents can give us tantalizing clues to their identities. The Hopi people of northeast Arizona, descendants of those we call Sinagua, refer to their ancestors as the *Hisatsinom*, or "the people of the past."

As researchers have learned more about the relationships of prehistoric groups to modern Indian cultures, the term "*Ancestral Pueblo*" is being more frequently used and is a name preferred by the modern Pueblo people. It is also a way to recognize that even though these people of the past had their own unique cultures, they also shared core values that united them into a larger Pueblo cultural tradition. These concepts, such as a focus on corn, clan social structures, ceremonial societies, kivas for religious structures, the katsina religion and pueblo architecture are still vital to the modern Pueblo people of Arizona and New Mexico.

The contributions of the *Hisatsinom* continue to be manifest in the arts, crafts, ceremonies and practices of Pueblo people today, strengthening a deep connection with the past and preserving this traditional knowledge for future generations.

The nearly 60 year old diorama located on the loop trail at Montezuma Castle was installed in 1951, after the completion of the I-17 freeway resulted in a dramatic increase in visitation to Montezuma Castle, forcing the park to no longer allow visitors to access the structure itself.

They Did Not Disappear!

Many theories have been proposed for why the Sinagua left their homes in the Verde Valley to move to larger pueblos in the north and east. The great trade networks, in place for centuries, disappeared, ending commercial and social contact between people. A prolonged period of drought starting in A.D. 1380 made farming a challenge in areas away from perennial waterways. Disease, conflict and depletion of resources may have been factors. The Hopi people of today say it was a migration of their ancestors; preordained to fulfill a covenant with one of their most important spiritual beings, and they stress the fact that they did not disappear. They are still very much here.

Whatever the reason for their departure, one thing remains true to this day: the Verde Valley is never completely without people. The ancestors of today's Yavapai and Apache people became caretakers of the land after the great Sinaguan exodus. In fact, their descendants continue to live within sight of one of the most recognizable and enduring symbols of the ancient Sinagua, Montezuma Castle.

The ancestors of today's Yavapai and Apache people became caretakers of the land after the great Sinaguan exodus. In fact, their descendants continue to live within sight of one of the most recognizable and enduring symbols of the ancient Sinagua, Montezuma Castle.

Echoes of the Past

A visit to Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well or Tuzigoot National Monuments is more than simply an occasion to see some impressive ruins, or a chance to take a short break during the long drive to the Grand Canyon. It is an opportunity to glimpse a 10,000 year story of the ingenuity and perseverance of a people skilled at adapting to an ever changing, and often unforgiving landscape. It is a time to listen to the echoes of a past filled with change and struggle, fear and hope, and perhaps learn a little about how we might cope with these challenges in our own lives. And it is a chance to discover the enduring legacy of a people who, like millions of us today, called northern Arizona home.

By Anne Worthington
National Park Service

National Park Service Centennial 2016

National parks are special places that unite us all as Americans. For nearly a century, the National Park Service has preserved these national treasures for all to enjoy. Now the National Park Service has the opportunity to build upon this remarkable legacy as we prepare for our 100th anniversary.

The Centenial Initiative

From now until the centennial in 2016, the National Park Service (NPS) will expand programs and complete projects at parks across the country to save America's special places and prepare them for a second century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

We will accomplish this work using additional operational funding from Congress and by matching federal dollars with private donations. Please visit www.nps.gov/2016 to learn about the National Park Service, the type of programs and projects we will focus on, and how you can join us in this historic effort.

MONTEZUMA WELL - A Natural Oasis

As seasons change, flocks of migratory green-winged teals and mallard ducks rest briefly on the surface of Montezuma Well. Muskrats, pond sliders and Sonoran mud turtles ply through the thick beds of brown-green algae that flourish through the year. This unique refuge is like no other on Earth!

This natural limestone sinkhole offers a unique setting as you experience the contrast of two distinct life zones along the one-third mile trail. The Well rim, like most of the area nearby, is a high desert life zone. The riparian area along Beaver Creek creates a yellow and green ribbon of lush growth through this semi-arid countryside.

The perennial flow of this spring-fed stream together with water from Montezuma Well and its irrigation canal truly creates a natural and soothing haven for visitors.

Time And Water: The Birth Of Montezuma Well

The story of Montezuma Well began 12 million years ago, when this part of the Verde Valley was covered by a large shallow lake. Floating plants in this body of water caused dissolved limestone to form minute crystals which slowly sank to the bottom, accumulating into thick layers of soft limestone rock.

About 2 million years ago the lake waters began disappearing. Underground streams started dissolving softer areas of the underground limestone and a cavern began to form. The passage of time and the force of water carved a cavern larger and larger until, about 11,000 years ago, the roof of one of these caverns gradually crumbled forming Montezuma Well.

Underwater Chain Of Life

Water entering Montezuma Well is at a constant 74 degrees with a flow of over 1,400,000 gallons a day. As the water passes through limestone it collects high amounts of dissolved carbon dioxide nearly 100 times higher than most natural aquatic environments.

The high levels of CO_2 make Montezuma Well completely inhospitable to fish, despite the presence of oxygen in the water. In their absence, an aquatic community of unique species, each dependent on the other, has evolved. Four of these species are found nowhere else on the planet!

Algae, small floating plants, manufacture food from light energy and the rich supply of carbon dioxide in the water.

At night, a great feeding frenzy begins among the creatures who have adapted to this harsh aquatic environment. Amphipods, tiny shrimp-like animals, feed by combing algae through appendages below their mouths.

Leeches, living by day in the bottom sediments of the well, rise at night and, searching with sensory hairs on their bodies, gulp large quantities of the small amphipods. Night-swimming water scorpions also make evening meals of the shrimp- like creatures.

With the first light of day, these creatures sink back to the depths of the Well until sunset, and the beginning of another cycle.

The Mystery Of The Water

Scientists have not discovered the origin of the consistently warm water that feeds Montezuma Well. A current research topic with scientists from Northern Arizona University is trying to decipher where the water is coming from and from what level. Scientists have noted the flow rate from the Well rarely fluctuates — but the source deep in the earth's layers remains a mystery.

By Rex Vanderford
National Park Service

Wildlife of the Verde Valley

Although Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well, and Tuzigoot are small in size, an astounding diversity of animal species live here.

Birds

Over 200 species of birds inhabit the riparian and upland habitats at Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well, and Tuzigoot. The number of species observed each month varies, but is highest during the breeding season due to a large number of migrating birds. That being said, birding in the Verde Valley is exceptional any time of the year!

Mammals

About 50 species of mammals are known to live inside monument boundaries. Some animals, like desert cottontails, ground squirrels, and mule deer, are common and may be seen by a majority of visitors.

Insects & Arachnids

Hundreds of species of insects, arachnids and other invertebrates find a home in the unique ecosystems of the area monuments. These include harmless tarantulas as well as highly venomous black widow spiders and bark scorpions. These invertebrates reveal extraordinary evolutionary adaptations for survival in this arid desert environment.

Reptiles

Under-appreciated and sometimes feared, reptiles play an important role in the high-desert ecosystem. Lizards and snakes help control insect and rodent populations. In turn, both are potential meals for birds and mammals. Sonora mud turtles, which are easily spotted swimming and basking in Montezuma Well, depend on the abundance of small invertebrates and aquatic insects in the year-round supply of warm, fresh water. Other, less commonly seen reptiles include Western Diamondback & Black-tailed Rattlesnakes.

TUZIGOOT

Dawn comes easily to the world — touching upon the mountain ridges and then brightening down into the valleys. As the light comes to this hill above the river, the old walls reflect again a memory of life uncovered from times dust.

Archaeologists with a Civilian Works Administration crew excavated and stabilized the ancestral village, now know as Tuzigoot, in 1933 and built a museum to hold its material story in 1935.

Our present understanding is of hunters passing through this abundant valley perhaps 10,000 thousand years ago and then populated before A.D. 1100 by farming peoples who built their way of life on the available resources of land and water.

Although the last word is yet to be written on the goings and comings of these people, we know from our scientific inquiries some clues about the climate of the times. Rainfall is sometimes marginal; the crops may have depleted the soil nutrients after years of planting.

By the time the people of Tuzigoot left the region around A.D.1400 the citadel had housed perhaps 250 people in its 110 rooms. It was the city of its day where people learned to resolve the problems of living life together. And though with more people come more problems, there are also more of the same people to find solutions. There is a creativity of survival and choices threading through the generations that lived here.

How big was the world they called their own? By the stories of people and artifacts we know the Sinagua traded for shells from the coast and macaws from the south. Where did they go? Depending on our use of the language, "vanished" may come to mean moving on to other resources and other promised lands. The Hopi people of today tell, in their clan stories, of living in places like this before migrating to their present northern mesas.

Why did they leave? Perhaps resources became little and politics too much — or perhaps the Promised Land lay just beyond the horizon.

Enjoy your visit to Tuzigoot and look past the ruins to a time when the best world was on top of a hill made golden by dawns' light.

By John Reid
National Park Service

The intricate pattern of this cloth bag speaks to the aesthetic sense of the ancient peoples populating the area.

Tavasci Marsh: Relic of an Ancient World

Tuzigoot National Monument overlooks Tavasci Marsh, a natural riparian area protecting an old meander of the Verde River. This ancient world would have been familiar to the Sinagua who used water from the marsh and the Verde River to irrigate their crops. Today, Tavasci Marsh has been designated an Audubon Society Important Birding Area for the number and diversity of biological species that inhabit the area.

Reflections From A Summer Well Spent

Four Young Women, Three National Monuments, Two Govenment Houses, and One Summer Well Spent. In the summer of 2009 four young women from all over the United States were selected by the staff at Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments to serve as Student Conservation Association Interns (SCA) for sixteen weeks. Here, in thier own words, are their reflections from a summer well spent.

Fall carries a cool breath of change into a new season, a new cycle. Watching the gentle desert light dance upon the silvery sheen of cottonwood leaves amidst the heavy drone of cicadas, the leaving seems so far away. It's not. I planned my road trip to the Atlantic last night. The line on the map isn't a bold ruler across the middle; instead, the meandering route moves through six national parks, special places that hold the natural beauty and cultural lore of America.

This summer, I had the privilege of working in three of the many magical spaces where our collective heritage survives. Through the nonprofit Student Conservation Association (SCA), I was one of four interns volunteering at Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well, and Tuzigoot National Monuments. "It's a good time to reflect, and a good time to look forward," said Ranger Joshua Boles, our supervisor and mentor for the past four months.

We lived off $75 a week and endured scorpions and 112-degree temperatures because we wanted to make a difference, not because we were apathetic or directionless. After you finish college, there is pressure to find a job immediately, said Caroline Crecelius, who graduated from Truman State University with a major in anthropology and minor in Russian and Italian. "The job expectation outweighs how much you're using what you know," Crecelius said. "With the SCA, you're actually incorporating those skills into daily things, but you're also learning. I think that's really valuable."

This May, I earned my journalism degree with a minor in parks management from Arizona State University. I couldn't think of a better way to spend my days than in the desert splendor, connecting with you – the visitors – and hearing your stories about these amazing places.

"It was surprising to find out that I'm not the only one who thinks it's ridiculous to work at a job you hate," said Sarahanne Blake, a New York native with a psychology degree from the University of Delaware.

Leah Duran, Sarahanne Blake, Joshua Boles, Caroline Crecelius, & Amanda Jennison.

Intern Amanda Jennison, who has a Spanish and linguistics degree from her home state of New Hampshire, said her experience has given her a broader sense of how she fits into the conservation movement. "Through my work at a National Monument, I have reconnected with my love of wilderness," said Jennison, who plans to pursue environmental education. "I believe (it) is more important now than ever as we see a generation of children growing up with no real affinity for or understanding of nature and its place in their lives."

Here in the Verde Valley, nature makes her power known through soaring mountains, wide spaces, and brilliant sunsets. "I'm going to go through Western sky withdrawal," Crecelius said, reminiscing about how the light on her morning runs colors everything pink.

From our whirlwind introduction up until our last days, we have learned from the experts – our fellow rangers – who have so generously offered their help and knowledge. "All the plants and pieces of the landscape I didn't know were like letters in a foreign alphabet," Crecelius said. "When you learn their properties, you're learning to speak a different language, and you become part of that place."

We were offered a glimpse into the ancient world of the Sinagua when we toured the Castle – their former home – with our parks' archeologists, ascending a 100-foot cliff on ladders just as the Sinagua did. "I was granted this amazing opportunity and was humbled by it," Blake said. "I walked through it knowing I was walking on floors that yucca sandals walked over, and touched the walls that mortar was applied to."

An equally humbling experience was rattlesnake training. "Shy" and "elusive" may not seem like qualities of these often-feared animals, but that's how Jennison described a 52-inch rattlesnake caught at the Castle. "As I watched people lining up to touch the snake and listened to them asking thoughtful questions, I knew they were going to leave our park thinking about rattlers in a totally different way," Jennison said.

All of us will depart with enriched perspectives, of both the desert landscape and ourselves. "When you go to any new place, you end up learning something about yourself. The experience isn't about you, but it's a natural byproduct," said Crecelius, who plans to return to Missouri before traveling to Russia next year.

Even though our time here is finished, we will carry new knowledge, friendships and memories with us on our future adventures. Meanwhile, the legacy of these parks lives on in our hearts and minds, and in you, the visitors, who come to experience what we all have enjoyed so much.

-Leah Duran
National Park Service

"Well it's been heaven, but even the rainbows will end
Now my sails are fillin' and the wind is willin'
And I'm as good as gone again
I'm still walking, so I'm sure that I can dance
Just a Saint of Circumstance, just a tiger in a trance
Listen, sure don't know what I'm going for, but I'm going to go for it for sure."

~The Grateful Dead's "Saint of Circumstance"

FLAGSTAFF AREA MONUMENTS

Located within a 90 minute drive of the Verde Valley are three strikingly beautuiful and culturally significant National Monuments. Sunset Crater Volcano, Walnut Canyon, and Wupatki National Monuments are not to be missed for they each tell a different chapter of the unique history of the Native peoples of the Southwest and preserve the habitiats they called home.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument

People must have been warned by tremors and earthquakes before red-hot rocks exploded from the ground and rained down on their pit houses and farmland. Perhaps some stayed to watch as their homes and farmland were buried under slow-moving lava flows. Most fled, taking their possessions with them.

Billowing ash, falling cinders, and forest fires blackened the land and the daytime sky. At night, the horizon glowed fiery red. A large fire fountain, accompanied by lightning and a tremendous roar, could be seen and heard for hundreds of miles. It must have been the loudest noise these people had ever experienced.

When their world again grew quiet, people faced a dramatically altered land. New mountains, including the 1,000-foot-high cinder cone now known as Sunset Crater, stood where open meadows and forests had been. Black cinders blanketed the region.

Life in the shadow of the volcano was changed profoundly and forever. Some people relocated nearby at Walnut Canyon or Wupatki.

900 years later, Sunset Crater is still the youngest volcano on the Colorado Plateau. The volcano's red rim and the dark lava flows seem to have cooled and hardened to a jagged surface only yesterday. As plants return, so do the animals that use them for food and shelter. And so do human visitors, intrigued by this opportunity to see nature's response to a volcanic eruption.

Walnut Canyon National Monument

Hike down into Walnut Canyon and walk in the footsteps of the people that lived here over 900 years ago. Under limestone overhangs, the Sinagua built their homes. These single story structures, cliff dwellings, were occupied from about 1100 to 1250. Look down into the canyon and imagine the creek running through. Visualize a woman hiking up from the bottom with a pot of water on her back. Imagine the men on the rim farming corn or hunting deer. Think of a cold winter night with your family huddled around the fire...

Come out and see millions of years of history unraveled in the geology of the rocks. Listen to the Canyon Wren and enjoy the Turkey Vultures soaring above. And if you look closely, you may even see an elk or a javelina. Different lifezones overlap here, mixing species that usually live far apart. In this canyon, desert cacti grow alongside mountain firs. A truly beautiful place to see!

And it is a sacred place. The people that lived here moved on to become the modern pueblo people of today. Walnut Canyon is one of their ancestral homes. Travel through quietly and carefully. And please, leave no trace.

Wupatki National Monument

For its time and place, there was no other pueblo like Wupatki. Less than 800 years ago, it was the tallest, largest, and perhaps the richest and most influential pueblo around. It was home to 85-100 people, and several thousand more lived within a day's walk. And it was built in one of the lowest, warmest, and driest places on the Colorado Plateau. What compelled people to build here?

Human history here spans at least 10,000 years. But only for a time, in the 1100s, was the landscape this densely populated. The eruption of nearby Sunset Crater Volcano a century earlier probably played a part. Families that lost their homes to ash and lava had to move. They discovered that the cinders blanketing lands to the north could hold moisture needed for crops.

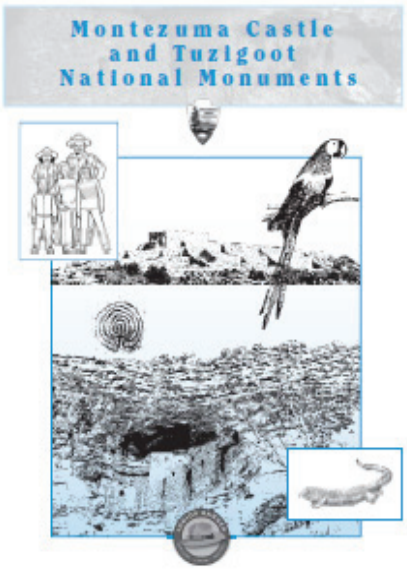
As the new agricultural community spread, small scattered homes were replaced by a few large pueblos, each surrounded by many smaller pueblos and pithouses. Wupatki, Wukoki, Lomaki, and other masonry pueblos emerged from bedrock. Trade networks expanded, bringing exotic items like turquoise, shell jewelry, copper bells, and parrots. Wupatki flourished as a meeting place of different cultures. Then, by about 1250, the people moved on.

The people of Wupatki came here from another place. From Wupatki, they sought out another home. Though no longer occupied, Wupatki is remembered and cared for, not abandoned.

Become a Junior Ranger!

Ask a park ranger at any of the three monument sites for a junior ranger booklet -- it's full of activities that will help you explore your National Monuments and have fun learning about nature and the people who lived here long ago! When you're done with your booklet, show it to any park ranger. We'll look it over, then swear you in as a Junior Park Ranger for Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments and give you an official badge! You can collect a different badge at any one of 275 different National Parks and Monuments across the country.

When you get home, you can even become a Webranger. To sign up, go to *www.nps.gov/webrangers*



Kids Corner

Can you tell a mano from a metate?

What kind of lizard was that one you spotted along the trail?

How did those people get up into the Castle, anyway?

If you've ever asked yourself any of these questions, or if you think you know the answer to them, you'd make a great Junior Ranger!

Ranger BINGO!

Check off all items in a row (diagonally, horizontally, up or down) as you find them.
Please do not collect the items. Leave them where you found them. You may have to visit more than one monument (Montezuma Castle, Montezuma Well, or Tuzigoot) to see all of these!
For an extra challenge, try and get them all for a BLACKOUT!

Rock Squirrel	Beaver Creek or the Verde River	raven	evidence of animal life	NPS arrowhead
A 3-D Model of Montezuma Castle	hiking trail	Arizona Sycamore	A Prehistoric Artifact	park newspaper: *Echoes*
wildflower	Lizard	Visitor Center or Ranger Station	picnic area	Pinacate Beetle
Another Junior Ranger	Cliff Dwelling	Prehistoric Irrigation Canal	recycling bin	Yucca
Snake	Prickly Pear Cactus	Meet a Park Ranger	Hilltop Pueblo Ruin	information sign

LOCAL FRIENDS & PARTNERS

Arizona State Parks

Website for all Arizona State Parks: www.azstateparks.com

Dead Horse State Park

Located on the Verde River near Cottonwood. An excellent place for bird watching, hiking and recreating along the Verde River. Offers picnicking, full-facility camping, fishing, horseback riding, and mountain biking.
HOURS: Ranger Station - 8am to 5pm daily; Trails open: 8am to 5pm (Oct - Mar); 8am to 6pm (Apr); 8am to 8pm (May-Sep) campgrounds remain open.
ADDRESS: 675 Dead Horse Ranch Road, Cottonwood AZ 86326
ADMISSION: fee per car
PHONE: 928-634-5283

Red Rock State Park

A nature preserve and environmental education center located a few miles south of Sedona. The picnic area and classrooms may be reserved for public or private functions. Designated hiking trails are available, but there is no swimming, wading or camping. Pets are not allowed in the park. There are many nature hikes, talks, and programs for children. Call for details.
HOURS: The Visitor Center - 8am to 5pm daily. Trails open 8am to 5pm (Oct–Mar); 8am to 6pm (April and Sept), 8am to 8pm (May - Aug).
ADDRESS: 4050 Red Rock Loop Rd., Sedona AZ 86339
ADMISSION: fee per car
PHONE: 928-282-6907

Slide Rock State Park

This park, in scenic Oak Creek Canyon, takes its name from the 30-foot water slide naturally worn into the rocks of the creek bed. There are opportunities for bird watching, fishing, hiking, and relaxing along the creek. Pets are allowed if on leash in most areas of the park, but not in the swimming areas.
HOURS: Day use only. 8am to 5pm
ADDRESS: 6871 N. Highway 89A Sedona AZ 86339 (in Oak Creek Canyon).
ADMISSION: fee per car up to four adults. Call for details
PHONE: 928-282-3034

Fort Verde State Historic Park

General Crook's US Army scouts and soldiers were stationed at Fort Verde in the late 1800s. Several original buildings still exist. Historic military living quarters are open to visitors and teach about life on the frontier. The museum located in the old headquarters buildings displays artifacts explaining the history and methods of frontier soldiering.
HOURS: 8am to 5pm Thurs-Mon; closed Christmas Day
ADDRESS: 125 E. Hollamon Street, Camp Verde AZ 86322
ADMISSION: fee; children under 13 free
PHONE: 928-567-3275
WEB: www.azstateparks.com

Arizona Game and Fish

Page Springs Hatchery

Arizona's largest fish hatchery. A self-guided tour takes visitors through the main hatchery where rainbow and brown trout are raised to be released in waters throughout Arizona. There are two additional nature trails and some of the walk is along Oak Creek. The Page Springs Hatchery is also an Audubon-designated Important Bird Area; sightings of bald eagles are common in winter months.
HOURS: 8am to 3:30pm daily; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas
ADDRESS: 1600 N Page Springs Road, Cornville AZ 86325
ADMISSION: no charge
PHONE: 928-634-4805

U.S. Forest Service

Palatki Heritage Site

Cliff dwelling and pictograph trail, interpreting the prehistoric Sinagua culture. Reservations are required because the parking lot only has 16 spaces.
HOURS: 9:30am to 3:30pm daily; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day
ADMISSION: fee; Red Rock, Interagency Annual, Senior or Access pass.
PHONE: 928-282-3854

Honanki Heritage Site

Cliff dwelling with associated rock art, interpreting the prehistoric Sinagua culture.
HOURS: 10am to Sundown daily; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas
ADMISSION: fee; Red Rock, Interagency Annual, Senior or Access pass.
PHONE: 928-282-4119

V-V Heritage Site

Rock art site highlighting over 1200 petroglyphs. There is a small visitor center and gift store.
HOURS: 9:30am to 3:30pm daily; open Friday-Monday; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas
ADMISSION: fee; Red Rock, Interagency Annual, Senior or Access pass.
PHONE: 928-282-4119

Yavapai-Apache Nation

Yavapai-Apache Tourism Department

Information on activities through the Yavapai-Apache Nation.
ADDRESS: 355 Middle Verde Road, Camp Verde AZ 86322
PHONE: 928-567-1004
WEB: www.yavapai-apache-nation.com

Chambers of Commerce

Camp Verde Chamber of Commerce

385 South Main Street,
Camp Verde AZ 86322; 928-567-9294
WEB: www.campverde.org

Clarkdale Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 245, Clarkdale AZ 86324
928-634-8700
WEB: www.clarkdalechamber.com

Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce

1010 South Main Street, Jnctn 89A and 260
Cottonwood AZ 86326; 928-634-7593
WEB: www.cottonwood.verdevalley.com

Jerome Chamber of Commerce

PO Box K, Jerome AZ 86331
928-634-2900
WEB: www.jeromechamber.com

Sedona-Oak Creek Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 478, Sedona AZ 96339
800-288-7336
WEB: www.sedonachamber.com

Historical Societies & Museums

Camp Verde Historical Society and Museum

PHONE: 928-567-9560
WEB: www.sedona-verdevalleymuseums.org

Sedona Historical Society & Heritage Museum

PHONE: 928-282-7038
WEB: www.sedonamuseums.org

Clemenceau Heritage Museum

PHONE: 928-634-2868
WEB: www.sedona-verdevalleymuseums.org

Clarkdale Heritage Museum

PHONE: 928-649-1198
WEB: www.clarkdalechamber.com

WESTERN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION

Western National Parks Association was founded in 1938 to aid and promote the educational and scientific activities of the National Park Service. As a nonprofit organization authorized by Congress, we operate visitor center bookstores, produce publications, and support educational programs at more than 63 parks in 11 western states.

Bookstore Sales

Bookstore sales are WNPA's primary source of income and this income is used to support National Park Service interpretive programs. The following publications, available from WNPA, are recommended for making the most of your visit to the Verde Valley National Monuments in central Arizona.

For our full catalog, visit our visitor center bookstore, or browse online at www.wnpa.org.

Introducing the Parks

The People of Montezuma Castle and the Verde Valley

The Sinagua culture thrived in the Verde Valley of Arizona for nearly eight centuries. This book gives readers a closer look at the prople who lived there for generations: how they farmed, traded, and constructed the multistory dwelling explorers named Montezuma Castle.

20 pages. full color, 6"x9" $2.00

New! The Guide to National Parks of the Southwest

Rose Houk

This is your personal guide to the Southwest and the many opportunities for discovery in its national parks. 88 pages.
$12.95

Montezuma Castle National Monument

Susan Lamb

This book presents an overview of the early human history at Montezuma Castle National Monument, Including Montezuma Well. 16 pages, $4.95

Tuzigoot National Monument

Rose Houk

This book presents an overview of the early human history at Tuzigoot National Monument. 16 pages. $3.95

Ruins Along The River

Carle Hodge

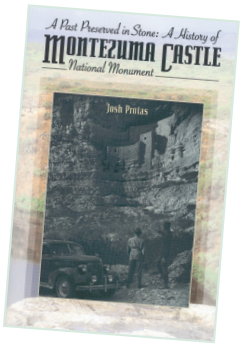
A study of the Sinagua culture in the Verde Valley. Includes Montezuma Castle National Monument, including the Montezuma Well Unit, and Tuzigoot National Monument. Also mentioned are Fort Verde, Jerome, Sedona, and the Flagstaff area National Monuments. 48 pages. $3.95

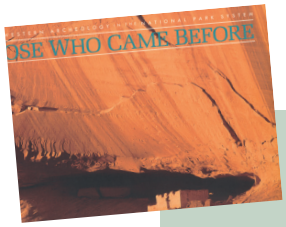
The Parks In-Depth

A Past Preserved in Stone: A History of Montezuma Castle National Monument

Josh Protas

An in-depth administrative history of Montezuma Castle National Monument, inclusing Montezuma Well. Contains historic photographs. 256 pages. $21.95





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Those who Came Before: Southwestern Archeology in the National Park System

Robert and Florence Lister

This is an excellent and comprehensive overview of southwestern archeological sites in the National Park System. 184 pages. $16.95

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Each booklet in this five-part series provides an introduction to the evolution, achievements, and lasting legacy of a distinct ancient culture. Please specify Anasazi, Hohokam, Mogollon, Salado, or Sinagua. 16 pages. $3.95 each. Complete Set $15.95

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Comprehensive list of over 60 selected trails highlighting hiking, camping, mountain bike trails, equestrian trails. Laminated topo map with elevation gains for all trails.
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